



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 23, 2015**

**CONTACT:**

Rebecca Colvin, DEC Program Coordinator, (907) 269-7802, rebecca.colvin@alaska.gov

**DEC Encourages Participation in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day**

(JUNEAU, AK) – The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) encourages Alaskans to participate in the National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, September 26 from 10am to 2pm.

The National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day promotes safe collection and disposal of unwanted or expired prescription medication. Proper disposal reduces the chance of discarded drugs entering waterbodies and causing harm to public health and the environment.

Alaskans have participated in several collection days over the past five years and have collected over 20,000 pounds of drugs since the event began. Statewide totals include:

- 1,336 pounds in 2010
- 3,481 pounds in 2011
- 4,560 pounds in 2012
- 6,694 pounds in 2013
- 4,371 pounds in 2014

“Safe disposal of drugs is an important, but often overlooked part of environmental protection,” said Environmental Program Manager, Bob Blankenburg. “This event draws attention to the environmental concerns surrounding drugs in our environment and ensures that these materials are disposed of properly.”

The event is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice’s Drug Enforcement Administration. Drugs will be collected anonymously. Collection sites will be open across Alaska and more locations are added every day.

For a complete list of collection sites, visit the National Take Back Initiative website at: [http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/index.html](http://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html).

For more information on safe disposal of drugs, visit DEC’s website: [http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/docs/sw/Prescription\\_Vet\\_Medicine\\_Disposal.pdf](http://dec.alaska.gov/eh/docs/sw/Prescription_Vet_Medicine_Disposal.pdf).